

Wallingford Selectboard Meeting

Minutes

April 18, 2022

Selectboard Members Present: Carolyn Behrendt, Bruce Duchesne, Justin Jankus, and Nelson Tift. Kathy Luzader was not in attendance.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Julie Sharon, Steve Lanfear, Phil Baker, Robert Allen, Gabriella Netsch, Elicia Pinsonault, Wendy Savery, Kate Goetz, Sumio Seo, Anne Awad, Debbie Scranton, Morgan Over, Maria French, Carol Macleod, Ann Buffum, Kathleen Upton, Carol Tashie, Bert Jones, and Greg McCormack.

Selectboard Chair Nelson Tift called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Amendments. By consensus, the Board approved the agenda with no changes.

Minutes. B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to approve the 04/04/22 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried (4-0).

Pay Orders. J. Jankus made a motion that was seconded by B. Duchesne to approve the 04/19/22 pay order total of \$36,481.73. Motion carried (4-0).

Honorable Mentions. John McClallen donated his \$1,000 Selectboard stipend to cover the cost of a sunflower themed mural to be painted on the Elfin Lake concession stand by Macey DeLorme Smith; Wallingford Thrift donated \$300 toward the monthly newsletter - Wallingford Standard; Carol Tashie and Dennis Duhaime for repairing, painting and detailing the picnic table at Stone Meadow; Rose and Jim Regula for putting up the net at the tennis court.

Road Commissioner's Report. By consensus, the Board approved a Letter of Support to Kevin Marshia of VTrans requesting priority funding for the Creek Road Bridge.

ARPA Revenue Loss. ARPA Committee members Robert Allen and Anne Awad were in attendance to recommend the Board select the standard allowance allowed under U.S. Treasury's Final Rule.

Mr. Allen provided an overview of this option for replacing lost public sector revenue as a result of the pandemic. He said this action would provide more flexibility in spending ARPA funds on a wide range of government services with streamlined reporting. Ms. Awad noted this action would not preclude the ARPA Committee from making recommendations for use of funds.

By consensus, the Board approved the recommendation to select the ARPA standard allowance.

Public Comments. None.

Road Commissioner Report. Road Commissioner Phil Baker arrived at the meeting. He reported the road crew had been hauling gravel and grading roads. No issues to report with roads or equipment. Board members briefly discussed a Operational and Maintenance Agreement provided by Watershed Consultants for the Wallingford Elementary School Stormwater System. N. Tift indicated board members should meet later in the week to review the document.

Declaration of Inclusion. Wendy Savery read aloud a Declaration of Inclusion for the Board to consider adopting on behalf of the Town. She read:

The Town of Wallingford condemns racism, welcomes all persons, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community. As a town, we formally condemn discrimination in all its forms against people in any marginalized community and commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone. We will strive to ensure all our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment. The Town of Wallingford is and will continue to be a place where individuals can live and express their opinions freely.

J. Jankus said the statement was all encompassing. Anne Awad said she appreciated the initiative and indicated the statement was very important for the community. Elicia Pinsonault said it was the right thing to do to create a welcoming community for everyone. She added there were economic benefits by creating such an environment with more people interested in buying homes in Wallingford, investing in the Town and spending tax dollars here

By consensus, the Board adopted the Declaration of Inclusion and agreed to sign the document.

Quarterly Financials. Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon provided a detailed overview and memorandum of FY'22 third quarter revenues and expenses. She added April 18 was property tax due date and there was \$125,000 delinquent, which was an increase of about \$7,500 from last year.

Stone Meadow Bike Jumps. Conservation Commission Co-Chair Debbie Scranton said during an assessment of Stone Meadow with a trail expert on April 11, commissioners noticed logs and dead fall covering bike jumps near the Book Path had been cleared and the jumps were enlarged. She said the trail expert said the jumps could be potentially dangerous to bikers and pedestrians using the Rim Trail. As a result, she said commissioners posted signs banning use of jumps.

J. Jankus suggested an initiative that would involve bike enthusiasts working with commissioners to find a solution. Morgan Over said the bike jumps should be removed and the Outer Limit trail should be reassessed. She said she was willing to take on the project as bike trails were a great resource for teenagers. Ms. Scranton said Stone Meadow was a conservation area and recreation was to minimally disturb the landscape. C. Behrendt noted a compromise between conservation and recreation was needed as biking was both a youth and adult activity that was increasing in popularity.

B. Duchesne recommended hiring Phil Baker to remove the bike jumps with a mini excavator and level the area and then possibly install a split rail fence to separate the Outer Limit bike trail with the walking trail.

By consensus, the Board approved Mr. Baker meeting with Conservation Commissioners to come up with a plan and then remove the bike jumps.

Unison Cell Tower Lease Purchase. Unison's Joe Fagone joined the meeting via speakerphone. He provided an overview of a proposal to purchase the AT&T Cell Tower lease in one lump sum or in negotiated payments to the Town. He said Unison would then collect the rent from AT&T. He said Unison would likely negotiate for additional carriers to rent space at Town Hall with Unison and the Town splitting income.

After an extensive conversation, Mr. Fagone offered to put a proposal in writing for consideration at the May 2 meeting. N. Tift polled the Board and no one expressed an interest in pursuing the Unison offer.

Master Gardner Project at the Boy With the Boot Garden. By consensus, the Board approved Anne Awad's request to pursue a Master Gardener project at the Boy With the Boot garden with local residents who regularly maintain it.

Wallingford Day. Maria French said Wallingford Day volunteers were working with a Rutland County business to provide a fireworks display at the July 16 event. She said the necessary paperwork would be submitted to the Wallingford fire chief for approval. Ms. French said there would be food trucks and the group would be promoting local eateries as well. She said Wallingford Day would have a sunflower theme this year. She added Jane Duda would be overseeing a social media campaign. Other events planned included a community wide yard sale, an Historic walking tour, games and a DJ for music.

Ms. French said she attended the Recreation Committee meeting on April 12 and members were tentatively in favor of the Wallingford Day group becoming a sub-committee of the Recreation Committee to ensure municipal insurance coverage as well as continued expense and revenue oversight through the town clerk and treasurer's office. J. Jankus advised Ms. French to meet again with the Recreation Committee on this matter and the committee would make a recommendation to the Selectboard. Ms. French agreed. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer said as a municipal committee or sub-committee, Wallingford Day would then be subject to the Open Meeting Law requiring agendas and Minutes for meetings.

Summer Employee Salaries. By consensus, the Board approved 3 percent raises for Summer Recreation Program employees Lisa Cotrupi, Lawrie Roundy and Debby Neubert.

The Board by consensus approved hiring returning lifeguard Alia Lunna and set her wage at \$13.25/hour; set first year lifeguard Ethan Kenny's wage at \$12.75/hour; and concession stand workers at minimum wage(increased to \$12.55/hour this year).

C. Behrendt advised researching pay rates for lifeguards in other towns at budget time to ensure Wallingford was offering competitive wages.

VLCT PACIF Safety Grant. By consensus, the Board approved submission of a VLCT PACIF Safety Grant application in the amount of \$2,564.49 for road sign packages requested by the road crew. It was noted there was no local match. VLCT would pay up to \$2,500 for this grant.

Development Review Board and Planning Commission Resignation. By consensus, the Board accepted Bill Brooks resignation from the Development Review Board and Planning Commission.

N. Tift asked that Mr. Brooks service as a Selectboard member and chair be added to the Letter of Appreciation.

Main Street Benches. The Board considered Lynn Brown's request for three benches to be installed on Main Street for seniors. N. Tift noted the Carving Studio had selected the Town as recipient of a stone carved bench this summer. He directed the town administrator to contact Gilbert Hart Library officials for permission to install it there.

After a brief discussion, board members agreed to ask the Recreation Committee to consider art projects and/or sponsorships for two other benches.

Elfin Lake Dock. By consensus, the Board agreed to sell the Elfin Lake public beach dock since a new raft/dock had been purchased.

Summer Recreation Counselor in Training Program. Tabled.

Selectboard Concerns. N. Tift noted the town administrator, Kathy Luzader, Bruce Dobbins and Peg Soule had met with RRPC's Devon Neary to visit the village sidewalks in need of replacement. He said Mr. Neary estimated \$425,630 to replace School Street sidewalks alone with an \$85,126 local match.

Other Business. N. Tift acknowledged receipt of Rutland Town Selectboard's letter regarding Vermont State Police discontinuance of municipal dispatch services in January of 2024. He indicated the Town should encourage legislative representatives to question this action and explore ways for the law enforcement agency to continue offering the service. Otherwise, he said the cost of regional dispatch services on municipalities could be exorbitant. J. Jankus said Wallingford could respond to Rutland Town officials the Selectboard members respected their initiative but opposed the state police discontinuance of dispatch services.

By consensus, the Board approved hiring Josh Bowen as a concession stand employee.

B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to adjourn at 8:28 p.m. Motion carried (4-0).

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 2nd Day of May, 2022 Wallingford Selectboard

Carolyn Behrendt _____

Bruce Duchesne _____

Justin Jankus _____

Kathy Luzader _____

Nelson Tift _____